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Met Office wins BBC Weather contract

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The BBC announced today that it has appointed the Met Office to supply its weather services following a competitive tender. The new contract will run for a period of five years.

Weather presenter

The new contract means the Met Office will continue to supply weather services to the BBC. This includes the data on which the forecasts are based, on screen presenters and forecasting services across BBC output on TV, radio and online.

Following a thorough bid process and rigorous evaluation, the BBC selected the organisation it felt could best deliver the required services and offered the best value for money for licence-fee payers.

The Met Office has demonstrated its ability and commitment to deliver a high-quality service - through accuracy, consistency of data and flexibility.

The new contract means that the public will get more data for more locations and more frequently throughout the UK and around the world - which will help keep weather forecasts consistent and accurate.

It will also allow the BBC and the Met Office to organise their resources in a way which will help provide the most consistent forecasts across radio, TV, online and mobile.

Mark Byford, BBC Deputy Director General and Head of BBC Journalism, said: “Weather is a key part of the BBC’s news and information services, and, of course, is of endless fascination to us all across the UK. Not only do our audiences come to us in huge numbers for regular weather updates each day across television, radio and online, but they also turn to the BBC for accurate information and forecasts when big weather events happen anywhere across the country.

“This announcement follows a very thorough and competitive tender process and we are confident the new contract with the Met Office will deliver strong value for licence-fee payers and will enable, through this partnership, BBC Weather to produce authoritative, reliable, accurate and innovative forecasts on which our audiences rely.”

John Hirst, Chief Executive of the Met Office, said: “The Met Office leads the world in broadcast meteorology and we are delighted to renew our weather broadcasting partnership with the BBC. This contract ensures that the BBC’s UK and global audiences will continue to receive trusted forecasts and critical warnings from the Met Office.”

The Met Office provides on-air forecast services not only to the BBC, but also to ITV and Channel 4. We also provide forecast data to Sky News.

Notes to editors

The Met Office

- The Met Office supports many people and organisations, from the general public, government and local authorities, to civil aviation, utilities, transport and almost every other industry sector.
- The Met Office is a Trading Fund agency owned by the Ministry of Defence. As such we operate in the same way as a commercial business, generating income which is payed back to government. Through this we help to secure future investment in our world-leading science and research.

BBC Weather

- The BBC Weather Centre is a fully multi-media operation with over 100 broadcasts a day, on TV, radio, online and the Red Button. This covers the BBC’s national, regional and international channels, as well as a full schedule of broadcasts at weekends. The Weather Centre also issues a variety of weather bulletins for other BBC services including Radio 4, Radio 5 Live and the British Forces Broadcast Service (BFBS).
- The TV weather forecasts are live and unscripted, and their preparation uses some of the most innovative computer software around.
- The BBC weather presenters are trained broadcast meteorologists employed by the Met Office; supported by data and information provided by the 24/7 Met Office Operations Centre in Exeter.
- On 11 January 1954 the BBC presented its first ever TV forecast. Prior to this, weather charts had been presented on screen with captions.

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